Workshop With NWS Partners
Discussion/Actions

Valid Time Event Code (VTEC)

Discussion Points:

- A numbering system for VTEC is desirable and improves the utility of VTEC
- Any numbering system is better than none
- The implementation of VTEC without numbering is better than no VTEC
- Implementation schedule is okay but prefer national implementation

Spanish Products

Discussion Points:
Partners expressed a desire for the use of new product categories (NNN) in the AWIPS header for Spanish products. When considering the decision to implement changes to the issuance of Spanish and English products, the Office of System Operations (OSO) should consider partners' wishes. If this suggestion is accepted, these new codes must be able to tie into the Emergency Alert System (EAS) and NOAA Weather Radio (NWR).

Dissemination of Radar Data

1. While NWS partners realize plans for the dissemination of radar data are in the draft phase, they would like to be kept up-to-date on decisions made as the plan progresses.

Recommended Action(s): NWS should assess various means for quarterly reporting of the status of the dissemination of radar products.

Action Office: OSO - Mike Carelli

Status: **Closed**
The NIDs agreement has been extended until the end of September 2000 with an option for additional 90 days extensions if the NWS central collection system is not operational. A Federal Register notice was issued regarding the extension. It has been posted on the Internet at http://www.nws.noaa.gov/im/.

NOAAPort

2. Need to evaluate the placement of the Communication Control Block (CCB) by the Network Control Facility (NCF).

Recommended Action(s): Correct the erroneous entry in the CCB.

Action Office: OSO - Fred Branski

Status: **Closed**
Erroneous entry in the CCB has been corrected.

3. There should be a designator for mixed mode products (text versus graphics) in the CCB.

Recommended Action(s): NWS should investigate creating a new value for the identification of mixed mode products. If successful, partners and customers should be notified.

Action Office: OSO - Fred Branski

Status: **Closed**
NWS reviewed the product database to check existing CCB usage and correct any errors. CCB values for specific products which partners have made the NWS aware of have been changed. Fred Branski also worked individually with partners to help them solve their problems. Partners are encouraged to inform NWS Data Management of any other alphanumeric or binary products which are incorrect. Contact Richard Robinson at 301-713-0864 ext. 179, email: richard.robinson@noaa.gov.

4. High-level listing of NOAAPort products needs to be established in order to help NWS partners and customers understand the myriad of products which are available on NOAAPort. At a minimum, this list should include the WMO heading, product name and description, frequency of issuance and the use of the product.

Recommended Action(s): NWS should create a list. The Internet might be the logical location.

Action Office: OM/OSO

Status: The NWS is committed to making its products and information about its products available on the Internet. The URLs http://www.nws.noaa.gov/oso/notices/notices.shtml and http://www.nws.noaa.gov/oso/content.shtml will provide some information about bulletins and their content, though not to the extent desired. Information on NWS communications identifiers may be obtained at http://www.nws.noaa.gov/oso/cominfo.shtml.

Automated Surface Observing System (ASOS)

5. Partners have a need for special NWS ASOS observations to report temperatures to a tenth of a degree.

Recommended Action(s): NWS will look into the possibility of converting temperature readings in special reports to the nearest tenth of a degree.

Action Office: OSO/OM - Rick Parry/Joanne Swanson

Status:
The proposed change is in final coordination with the FAA. The NWS is working towards a build 3.00 implementation, though the final approval for content of build 3.00 has not yet been granted, and it may be delayed. The earliest this change could be incorporated is ASOS build 3.00, estimated deployment mid 2001.

Model Output Statistics (MOS)

Discussion Point:

- Partners expressed a desire to receive ETA MOS if and when the NWS produces a package for its own forecasters.

6. There is a request from partners to see more MOS data available covering Canadian locations.

Recommended Action(s): NWS will look into what Canadian data is currently available and from what sources. Contact will be made with the Canadian Atmospheric Environment Service.

Action Office: Industrial Meteorology - Allan Eustis

Status: **Closed**
Some Canadian eta model meteograms of forecast output with parameters similar to MOS output are available via the Web. These experimental products are available at the Environmental Modeling Center Homepage at http://ftp.ncep.noaa.gov:8000/research/meteo2.html

Canadian stations can be accessed directly off of the map. To find the actual location, click on the star and copy the WBAN identifier (5 digits) at the top of the meteogram. Proceed to the OSO Homepage to translate the WBAN number into the actual name of the station including latitude and longitude. The site is: http://www.nws.noaa.gov/siteloc.shtml. Alternatively, the data is available in BUFR format on NOAAPORT and Family of Service.

The Canadian Meteorological Center produces guidance packages for Canadian sites. Packages are available for a cost and contain forecasts of temperature, max/min temperatures, probability of precipitation, clouds, winds, etc. Mr. Rick Jones is the contact for commercial clients. He can be reached by email (rick.jones@ec.gc.ca) or phone 514-421-4782. Internationally, we respect the right of sovereigns to issue and disseminate their own forecasts.

7. MOS guidance is available in ASCII and BUFR (binary format), although BUFR data is available for more locations. While both formats are useful to partners, there should be more advertisement of the BUFR data.

Recommended Action(s): The NWS will send a description of the MOS BUFR messages to the partners and to other FOS users. The NWS will also place the document on an appropriate Web Page.

Action Office: TDL - Paul Dallavalle

Status: **Closed**
The document was provided in the July, 1999, action item status update to partners attending the April, 1999 workshop. It is also being placed on the NWS Web at www.nws.noaa.gov/im/

Requirements Process

8. It should be made clear how partners can be more involved in the requirements process. They would like to be in a proactive mode rather than reactive.

Recommended Action(s): NWS will look at methods to educate partners on the requirements process and to ensure they have ample opportunity for input. One approach may be via the Internet. The NWS should investigate the use of a list server.

Action Office: OM - Rich Lane

Status: An initial requirements process has been written and tested. Feedback from the test period is being used to make changes in the process in order to make it more efficient. An Internet test site has been developed at www.oso3.nws.noaa.gov/oso3/rgpp. While this site is not operational, we ask for your review and comments. Please email your suggestions to Rich Lane, email: richard.lane@noaa.gov

Watch by County
Discussion Points: Partners stressed the need for internal coordination between SPC and the affected WFOs in order to reduce confusion and errors during episodes of severe weather

- When making changes to the current watch process, the following partners' concerns should be considered:
  - Watches should become valid upon issuance
  - More care should be used when replacing a watch box with an updated watch box to avoid confusion regarding which counties are still under a watch
  - When issuing convective watches, the duration of the watch should balance the need of emergency management and the public

9. There is a strong desire for the NWS to produce a consolidated list of counties when a watch is issued.

Recommended Action(s): As plans for watch by county solidify, the NWS should strongly consider the issuance of a single list of all counties included in a watch. In order to decrease errors within the county list, before a watch is disseminated, the SPC and all impacted WFOs will coordinate and agree as to which counties will be included in the proposed watch.

Action Office: OM12/SPC - Petersen/Schaefer

Status: **Closed**

A meeting with the Meteorological Services Chiefs approved this concept. Plans are for this action to be incorporated in Phase 1 of Watch Decentralization. Implementation date is scheduled for March 2000.

10. Partners would like watches issued by the SPC differentiated by type. When receiving the watch message, there is no specific coding to indicate if the watch is a tornado watch or severe thunderstorm watch. One solution is to change the WW designation in the third line of the watch message. It currently is: *SPC WW ddhhmm*. Where dd is day, hh is hour and mm is minute. For example, the WW could be changed to WT for a tornado watch and remain WS for severe thunderstorm watch.

Recommended Action(s): The feasibility of this change should be investigated and the potential impacts of this change on all systems of dissemination.

Action Office: OM12/SPC - Petersen/Schaefer

Status: **Closed**
OM and SPC have coordinated on this suggestion. The SPC will be testing these products with the watches differentiated during the spring and summer of 2000.

Experimental Probabilistic Convective Outlook

Discussion Points:
When implementing the Probabilistic Convective Outlook, consideration should be given to the following comments:

- Partners prefer separate products covering the risk of tornadoes, hail and high winds
- All products should include a key
- Do not use probabilities in the actual watch but use better adjectives to describe the threat to heighten awareness

Public Products

Discussions:

- Partners would like the 3- to 5-day forecast in the zones implemented nationwide
- State forecasts are still worthwhile and partners like both the narrative and tabular style format

11. Winter weather products are becoming a dumping ground for the inclusion of various warnings. For example, a winter storm warning, a winter weather advisory and high wind watch may appear in the same product. Winter weather products should have better segmentation or each warning should be placed in a separate product.

Recommended Action(s): Policy regarding the WSW and NPW products should be reviewed and clarification provided to partners and NWS field offices.

Action Office: OM12 - Jannie Gibson

Status: **Closed**
Policy was provided to NWS partners in the October mailing and posted on the Internet at www.nws.noaa.gov/im. Partners should contact Jannie Gibson at 301-713-1726 x149 or email at jannie.gibson@noaa.gov.

12. Partners indicated frustration over so many WFOs issuing zone forecasts for each state. For example, seven WFOs issue zone forecasts for North Carolina. Partners would like the zones compiled by state.

Recommended Action(s): Methods for compiling zones by state should be investigated.

Action Office: OM12 - Mike Matthews

Status: OM12 is working with the AWIPS Program Office to investigate methods of reformatting the zones with AWIPS software.

13. Apparent inconsistencies in watches, warnings and advisories sometimes occur across WFO boundaries. This causes problems and confusion for the public and the private sector.

Recommended Action(s): NWS should continue to pursue methods for collaboration and coordination among field offices. WFOs should be reminded of the importance of inter-office collaboration and coordination in the forecast and warning process.

Action Office: OM11 - Kiser

Status: **Closed**
SPC is currently using FTS2000 Teleconference Service to coordinate with field offices. Western Region field offices routinely collaborate and coordinate forecasts and warnings using FTS2000 Teleconference service. Other NWS offices use the FTS2000 Teleconference Service for collaboration and coordination on an event-driven basis. The NWS has funded an external study which will recommend future telecommunication strategies including forecast and warning collaboration and coordination. AWIPS remote display capability of graphic and text products to facilitate coordination is scheduled for Build 5 in September 2000. A single list of counties for a convective watch will also help with this issue. Regional offices were contacted and reminded of the need for their field offices to coordinate their products.

Short Fused Bullet Style Warnings

Discussion Points:
- Partners stressed more standardization of products
- NWS should consider a bullet style format for all warnings
- Unique lettering for each bullet (A*, B*, C*, etc.) would help match the contents of each bullet with the bullet label (each bullet is currently labeled with an asterisk). Formatting should be kept simple and readable so all users needs can be met.

14. Short-fused warnings (tornado, flash flood, severe thunderstorm, special marine) products are not consistently following proper formatting procedures.

Recommended Action(s): Draft a letter to all Meteorological Service Division chiefs to reinforce to their field offices the need for consistent formatting of short-fused warnings products.

Action Office: OM12 - Dan Petersen

Status: The Office of Meteorology (OM) coordinated with the regional Meteorological Service Division chiefs regarding approaches to improving quality control. While several solutions have been proposed, an AWIPS software checking program is being considered. Partners will be notified when a final quality control process is defined.

Additionally, OM is aware test messages sent by field offices are not following a consistent format. Coordination will be conducted with the field to implement standard test and cancellation message formats.

15. The use of a "text crawl" across a television screen is a very popular method for the dissemination of NWS short-fused warnings. However, problems arise with the text crawl if the bullets are too long and wordy.

Recommended Action(s): Draft a letter to all Meteorological Service Division chiefs to reinforce to their field offices the need for short bullets with less wordiness. Additionally, NWS should inform the media regarding the possible use of the EAS stream to create a text crawl.

Action Office: OM12 - Dan Petersen

Status: A letter will be sent to each region reinforcing the need for shorter bullets and final decisions regarding action item #14. In agreement with the FCC, an EAS header code is sent for each short-fused warning. This data stream can be used as a text crawl. However, it provides only the basic details of the warning...who, what, where and when. It does not include the bullets.

Miscellaneous

16. Partners would like access to more research polar-orbiting satellite data.

Recommended Action(s): NWS will inform partners of the various means for obtaining this information.

Action Office: Industrial Meteorology - Allan Eustis

Status: **Closed**
The most complete source of polar satellite imagery on the Web is NOAA's satellite active archive at: http://www.saa.noaa.gov/. The polar satellite imagery here is the latest available

imagery stored on board satellite until the spacecraft flies over a downlink location at either Fairbanks, Alaska, or Wallops Island, Virginia. High resolution direct read out imagery from Anchorage, Honolulu and Monterey is also available here but it may be two hours old.

Other near real time sources of sector polar imagery are the Honolulu and Anchorage Homepage satellite pages at: http://www.alaska.net/~nwsar/html/sat/sat.html
http://www.nws.noaa.gov/pr/hnl/pages/satellite_frames.html

To request more information on polar satellite imagery, or better access to the imagery on the Web, contact the National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service at 301-457-5125.

17. There continues to be too many errors within NWS products. This includes but is not limited to the incorrect use of the UGC, WMO headings, wrong warning times and placing products under the incorrect WMO heading. There needs to be consistency among all offices as to the proper use of product headings and the text.

Recommended Action(s): NWS should investigate methods for quality control of products.

Action Office: OM22 - Radlein

Status: **Closed.**
The Interactive Forecast Preparation System (IFPS) and other product generation tools in AWIPS Build 5 will allow increased standardization of product formats. It should also provide additional product quality control features. The first of three releases which will comprise Build 5 is scheduled for implementation in September 2000.

As product generation software improves in future AWIPS software releases, further improvement will occur in elements such as UGC codes, date/time groupings and computer readable formats. AWIPS will also assist offices to be more correct in the use of WMO headers as AFOS headers become a secondary form of product identification.

The NWS will continue to work with partners to improve the quality control of products through AWIPS software builds.

18. All NWS products are issued in upper case format. WMO agreements state NWS products must be receivable and readable by all users of NWS data. This includes those partners and customers with low end equipment. It was suggested the NWS send products in lower and upper case which have no distribution to low end users.

Recommended Action(s): This suggestion should be investigated within the realms of the NWS commitment to WMO standards, DOD and other partners and customers.

Action Office: OSO/OM11/Industrial Meteorology

Status: **Closed.**

The NWS abides by WMO International standards which does not allow us to transmit in mixed case. The NWS does not have a method for determining who the “low end” users are. Consideration must also be given to those “low end” users who receive NWS products via a provider. Changing to mixed case could impact unknown second and third generation “low end” users.